

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)

)

Plaintiff,)

v.)

No. 14 CR 131

)

GHEORGUI MARTOV, *et al.*,)

Judge Ronald A. Guzmán

)

Defendants.)

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MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER

The government has brought a 29-count, 17-defendant indictment alleging an international bank card fraud/identity theft ring. As part of its pretrial disclosures, the government has produced approximately 12,500 Bulgarian-language conversations resulting from Title III intercepts of phone conversations. Defendant Vangelov has moved the court to approve his proposal for addressing the defendants' need to obtain translations of these recordings in preparation for trial. The proposal consists of two stages. The first stage would require defense counsel to designate which recordings are criminally related or relevant to the case. To accomplish this, each participating defense counsel would be responsible for reviewing a roughly equal number of recorded transactions utilizing the government-disclosed Line Sheets.¹ As each defense counsel finds the need for further review of any particular

¹ For every intercepted phone call during the government's investigation, Bulgarian-speaking FBI personnel created an English-language Line Sheet summarizing the conversation. Because the line sheets were prepared during the course of the investigation and were used in order to determine how best to allocate surveillance and other investigator resources going forward, the likelihood of the line sheets being unreliable or deliberately distorting the importance of the conversations is minimal. Thus, these Line Sheets should provide defense counsel with a starting point for the review of the intercepted conversations.

intercepted conversation, counsel will prepare a report listing any conversation as to which he or she would seek to have the appointed interpreter: 1) check the agents' Line Sheet summary for a particular call for accuracy; 2) create a more detailed summary of any intercepted call; 3) create a full transcript of a conversation; or 4) check the accuracy of the government-prepared transcript for a call. If approved by the Court, the appointed interpreter's resulting work product will be shared with all participating defense counsel.

Counsel for Vangelov estimates that by having the interpreter focus on calls that are criminally-related or otherwise relevant, the cost for the interpreter could be reduced to approximately \$21,000.00, to be funded by a \$1500.00 contribution from each participating defense counsel. Each appointed counsel who desires to participate must agree to request the Court to authorize \$1500.00 for interpreter services pursuant to the Criminal Justice Act. Each privately retained counsel who desires to participate must agree to pay an equal share of the total expense. At the Court's most recent status hearing, twelve defendants (Markov, Evtimov, Kotselov, Vangelov, Savov, Nedelchev, Gospodinov, Yordanov, Slavchev, Popovski, Todorov, and Gabov) agreed to participate in the proposed plan for obtaining interpreter services. Any other defendants wishing to participate in the proposed plan may petition the Court to do so within 7 days of the date of entry of this order.

Counsel for the participating defendants are authorized to proceed with their initial review of the government-provided Line Sheets. It is anticipated that there will be an overlap, *i.e.*, that several defendants may wish to have the same conversation translated or further investigated. Therefore, the participating defendants shall submit one consolidated report to the Court no later than September 30, 2014. The consolidated report shall contain at least three columns: (1) the designated calls in chronological order; (2) the task(s) the interpreter is being asked to complete for that call; and (3) for each call, which defendant has requested what task. The report shall also include an estimate by participating defense counsel of the

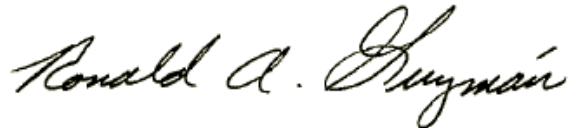
total cost of the interpreter's services with respect to the designated calls. Finally, the consolidated report shall include any other information the participating defendants deem relevant to the Court's review and approval of the requested interpreter services.

Only after its review of the consolidated report will the Court be in a position to estimate the overall cost of interpreter services in the fulfillment of this plan. After its review of the consolidated report, the Court may authorize the appointed interpreter to perform the requested work if it appears that the cumulative cost of interpreter services to fulfill the attorneys' requests, shared equally between them, will not exceed \$1500.00 per defendant. The Court's review of the consolidated report will also allow it to determine whether the plan must be certified for approval to the Chief Judge of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals and/or whether the participating defendants will need to agree to allocate additional funds for the interpreter's services.

Dated: August 21, 2014

SO ORDERED

ENTER:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ronald A. Guzmán". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'R' and 'G'.

RONALD A. GUZMÁN
District Judge